

Egypt to answer to UN body for ongoing social rights crisis - Press Release

New York/Cairo - Monday 11 November 2013: As Egypt's political crisis continues, its government will be asked to account to the United Nations later this week for what has been done to address the social injustices which fuelled the revolution.

On November 14, Egypt will appear before the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in Geneva, where it will be required to demonstrate how it has taken into account its human rights obligations as a party to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in navigating the country's turbulent transition. This will mark the first time that Egypt has come before a UN human rights treaty body since the 2011 revolution.

A joint report prepared by the Center for Economic and Social Rights (CESR), based in New York, and the Cairo-based Egyptian Center for Economic and Social Rights (ECESR), with the input and endorsement of Arab NGO Network for Development (ANND) and a broad coalition of 54 other Egyptian civil society organizations, argues that successive transitional governments have failed to embark on the structural reforms needed to address long-standing patterns of rising poverty, stark inequality and widespread social deprivation.

The report, submitted to the Committee in advance of this week's review, demonstrates that, since the people of Egypt took the streets in 2011 to demand a better future, little has been done to tackle soaring unemployment, skyrocketing food prices, inadequate social protection and failing public services, such as healthcare, housing, education and water and sanitation.



According to latest official estimates, a quarter of the population is living in poverty, a third of young people are unemployed and one in three children under five are chronically malnourished. Poverty and hunger are likely to have increased in recent years as the escalating cost of basic food commodities leaves many more families unable to meet their most basic needs.

Those most at risk are poorly served by an inefficient system of food and fuel subsidies, while other critical social protection mechanisms are unavailable. Inadequate levels of investment in key social sectors have remained stagnant since the revolution. As in other contexts of fiscal austerity, regressive taxes on goods and services have been proposed, despite the availability of fairer alternative options for revenue generation, in a short-sighted attempt to reduce the country's deficit.

The report calls for broad-based reforms to overcome the inequitable and unsustainable economic model of the Mubarak era, including progressive fiscal policy reforms and other measures to tackle entrenched inequalities, particularly among women. It concludes that it is critical for the sustainability of Egypt's transition that all areas of social and economic policy be brought into line with the country's human rights obligations under the Covenant, so as to address the deep-rooted social injustices at the heart of its ongoing political upheavals. It also calls for an end to the violent repression of strikes and public protests motivated by deteriorating economic conditions and for more transparent and participative processes through which civil society can engage in the social and economic transformations needed to realize the human rights of all in Egypt.

A delegation of civil society organizations will be travelling to Geneva to brief the members of the Committee on the concerns set out in the report. Following its dialogue with both the Egyptian government and civil society, the Committee will issue a set of recommendations regarding measures Egypt will be required to implement in order to meet its obligations under the Covenant. While aimed at the Egyptian authorities, the recommendations will also help to strengthen the



accountability of Egypt's international partners, including donors and international institutions, for their role in ensuring all human rights are safeguarded in Egypt's fragile transition.

For more information or to arrange interviews, please contact:

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The Joint Submission can be accessed at:

www.cesr.org/downloads/Egypt_CESCR_Joint_report_English.pdf

A new factsheet offering a concise graphical illustration of human rights regressions in Egypt can be accessed at:

<http://www.cesr.org/downloads/Egypt.Factsheet.web.pdf>

The Joint Submission has been endorsed by the following civil society organizations:

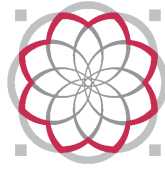
1. *Egyptian Center For Economic And Social Rights (drafting organization)*
2. *Center For Economic And Social Rights (drafting organization)*
3. *Arab NGO Network For Development (drafting organization)*
4. *Egyptian Initiative For Personal Rights (drafting organization)*
5. *Housing And Land Rights Network - Habitat International Coalition (drafting organization)*
6. *Nazra For Feminist Studies (drafting organization)*
7. *Association For Education Support And Development*
8. *Egyptian Coalition For Education For All*
9. *New Woman Foundation*
10. *Ahmed Abdallah Ruzza Development Association*



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Arab NGO Network for Development
شبكة المنظمات العربية غير الحكومية للتنمية

11. *Al Shehab Foundation For Comprehensive Development*
12. *Alexandria Workers' Permanent Conference*
13. *Appropriate Communication Techniques For Development*
14. *Assiut Childhood And Development Association*
15. *Association For The Development And Enhancement Of Women*
16. *Association For Freedom Of Thought And Expression*
17. *Association Of Health And Environmental Development*
18. *Arab House Foundation For Human Rights*
19. *Better Life Association For Comprehensive Development*
20. *Cairo Institute For Human Rights Studies*
21. *Care*
22. *Caritas Egypt*
23. *Center For Egyptian Woman's Legal Assistance*
24. *Coptic Evangelical Organization For Social Services*
25. *Development Support Center*
26. *Egyptian Association For Collective Rights*
27. *Egyptian Association For Community Participation Enhancement*
28. *Egyptian Association For Comprehensive Development*
29. *Egyptian Association For The Development Of The Capacity Of Children With Special Needs*
30. *Egyptian Center For Civil And Legislative Reform*
31. *Egyptian Coalition For Children's Rights*
32. *Egyptian Federation Of Independent Trade Unions*
33. *Future Foundation For Development In Aswan*
34. *General Independent Federation Of Egyptian Peasants*
35. *Habi Center For Environmental Rights*
36. *Hawa Future Association For Family And Environmental Development*
37. *Helwan Association For The Development Of The Community (Bashayer)*
38. *Hisham Mubarak Law Center*
39. *Hope Village Society For Social Development And Rehabilitation For The*



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شبكة المنظمات العربية غير الحكومية للتنمية

Disabled

40. *Independent Syndicate For Construction And Timber*
41. *Independent Syndicate For Oil And Soap*
42. *Independent Syndicate For Workers Of Abo Kir Electricity Company*
43. *Independent Syndicate For Workers Of Egyptian Navigation Company*
44. *Independent Syndicate For Workers Of High-Tech Companies*
45. *Independent Syndicate For Workers Of Lord Companies*
46. *Independent Syndicates For Workers Of Cadbury*
47. *Land Center For Human Rights*
48. *New Way Foundation For Peace And Education*
49. *Ro'ya For Consultancy And Training*
50. *Shomoo El-Amal Association For Child Culture And Development*
51. *South Center For Rights*
52. *Tanweer Foundation For Development And Education In Minya*
53. *Wadi El Nil Association For Protection Of Quarry Workers*
54. *Woman And Development Association*
55. *Woman And Society Association*
56. *Youth Association For Population And Development*
57. *Youth Association For Development And The Environment*